

VZCZCXRO4195

PP RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHDH RUEHIHL RUEHKUK
DE RUEHGB #3056/01 3241455

ZNY SSSS ZZH

P 201455Z NOV 09

FM AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5516

INFO RUCNRAQ/IRAQ COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHAK/AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY 0674

RUEKJCS/Joint STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY

RHMFIS/HQ FORSCOM-CMD GRP FT MCPHERSON GA PRIORITY

RHMFIS/HQ USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

RHMFIS/HQ USEUCOM VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY

RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHINGTON DC PRIORITY

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 03 BAGHDAD 003056

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 11/22/2009

TAGS: PREL MARR MOPS PGOV PINR PREF PTER TU IZ

SUBJECT: IN BAGHDAD, TURKEY AND U.S. DISCUSS

TURKEY-IRAQ-U.S. TRILATERAL PROCESS

REF: A) BAGHDAD 723 B) BAGHDAD 1018 C) BAGHDAD 2071

Classified By: Pol-Mil Minister Counselor, Cameron Munter, for reasons
1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (S) SUMMARY: On November 18, Major General (MG) Erdal Ozturk and delegation flew to Baghdad for a meeting with MG Steven Hummer and other U.S. officials to discuss the progress of the Turkey-Iraq-U.S. Trilateral Security Dialogue. During a one-on-one meeting between MG Ozturk and MG Hummer, Ozturk requested U.S. participation in joint teams to target PKK locations in the Qandil Mountains. MG Hummer declined, saying that the U.S. had no authority to participate in such activities. During the larger group meeting, discussions focused on 1) a proposed Trilateral Working Group visit to the sole official Turkey-Iraq border crossing in order to assess Iraqi capability and develop communication between Turkish and Iraqi border enforcement authorities, 2) enhanced cooperation and participation by the Turkish side at the Trilateral Intelligence Sharing Office (TISO) in Erbil in order to develop "actionable intelligence," leveraging bilateral training by Turkey and the U.S. in the KRG as a means to further isolate the PKK, and 3) the potential creation of a civilian committee under trilateral auspices to discuss the Makhmour refugee camp. Since the inception of the Trilateral Security Dialogue a year ago, the Turkish General Staff (TGS) has been steadfast in its single-minded focus on obtaining "actionable intelligence." The Turks initially resisted many of the ideas presented, the end result appears to have been increased TGS understanding that the Turkish military too must be an active participant to achieve our desired goal of neutralizing the PKK. END SUMMARY.

One-on-One

¶2. (C) On November 18, a Turkish delegation headed by MG Erdal Ozturk (Chief, Plans and Operations, Turkish General Staff) met with a U.S. delegation headed by MG Steven Hummer (Director, CJ3 Operations, MNF-I) to discuss progress and the way forward for the Turkey-Iraq-U.S. Trilateral Security Dialogue. The meeting was initiated by Turkey's new Ambassador to Iraq, Murat Ozcelik, who, after meeting with MG Hummer on November 9, believed a military-to-military meeting would help the trilateral process. At the end of the meeting, Ambassador Ozcelik noted the persuasive psychological influence on the PKK caused by the very knowledge that the U.S., Iraq and Turkey were coordinating their counter PKK efforts through the trilateral process.

Ozcelik indicated that Prime Minister Erdogan would likely raise it during his visit to Washington on December 7, as would Turkish defense leaders during the High Level Defense meeting on December 15.

¶3. (S) MG Hummer and MG Ozturk began with a 45-minute one-on-one meeting. The generals discussed the current situation with the PKK and the Turkish General Staff's (TGS) ongoing request for "actionable intelligence" from the GOI on the PKK. MG Ozturk also asked MG Hummer for U.S. participation in joint Turkish-U.S. teams that would work in the Qandil Mountains to target PKK locations. MG Hummer declined, saying that the U.S has no authority to do so, nor any policy to support such actions. The generals agreed to continuing support to the Trilateral Intelligence Sharing Office (TISO) in Erbil and more frequent intermediate-level steering group meetings. (Note: The Trilateral Working Group meets on a bi-monthly basis, however, the last Steering Group meeting was held on March 12 (Ref A) prior to the April 11 Ministerial meeting (Ref B). The last Trilateral Ministerial meeting was held on July 28 in Ankara (Ref C) and the next one is tentatively scheduled for mid-late December. End Note.)

Habur Gate/Ibrahim Khalil Visit

¶4. (S) Following the one-on-one meeting, the larger group convened and discussed numerous issues including a proposed Trilateral Working Group visit to the only official border

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crossing between Turkey and Iraq. (Note: The border crossing is called Habur Gate on the Turkish side and Ibrahim Khalil on the Iraqi side. End Note.) The U.S. delegation explained the purpose of the border visit is to assess Iraqi capabilities at the point of entry and to foster better communication between Turkish and Iraqi border officials, which in turn could lead to enhanced trust and cooperation overall. The TGS initially resisted, claiming that enhancing border cooperation and Iraqi capacity was not as relevant as targeting known PKK camps with "actionable intelligence," and saying that the window of opportunity to defeat the PKK was closing with the impending departure of U.S. Forces from Iraq. However, continued discussion led MG Ozturk to agree that, as a first step, the border visit was a worthwhile endeavor and that the TGS would cooperate. All parties agreed that word of a trilateral border visit would likely have the desired psychological impact on PKK leadership and that would be an advantage in efforts to increase political pressure on the PKK.

TISO and Training

¶5. (C) In response to the TGS, continuing refrain for, and frustration at, the lack of "actionable intelligence" from the TISO, the U.S. delegation reiterated the importance of the TISO and need for continued cooperation and confidence-building measures in order to establish the TISO as a conduit for the type of human intelligence the TGS specifically is seeking. The U.S. delegation outlined the potential for the TISO to become a combined fusion target center by networking together the KRG, GOI and potentially Turkish provided PKK base camp intelligence. The U.S. delegation informed that progress is being made but that it will take time and that full cooperation and participation from the Turkish side is required for success. MG Ozturk responded that the TGS would look into measures suggested during the discussion to improve participation in the TISO. He said the first step would be providing additional biometric information on the list of names that the Turks had previously provided and for which additional information has

been repeatedly requested by both the U.S. and Iraqis.

¶6. (C) Discussions on training centered largely on already established bilateral police training agreements between the GOT and GOI. The group noted that opportunities to leverage counter-narcotics, intelligence and police training in the KRG should be supported as a means to further isolate the PKK. The Turkish delegation noted that a complete list of training courses offered by the GOT was provided to the GOI but that to date no requests have been made. MG Ozturk pointed out that the GOT plans international training courses (with 60 other countries) years in advance, they are currently scheduling for 2012, and it is problematic that the GOI has not yet made any specific requests.

Makhmour

¶7. (S) On the issue of the Makhmour Camp, Ambassador Ozcelik informed the group that he had recently spoken with the Turkish Minister of Interior about forming a separate QTurkish Minister of Interior about forming a separate civilian committee under the trilateral auspices to discuss Makhmour. Ozcelik also voiced Turkish concerns regarding UNHCR's role in the repatriation of camp residents. He averred that too much UNHCR participation would hinder progress because of political opposition in Turkey. Turkey is committed to cooperating with UNHCR within Iraq "up to Habur Gate" but that is the extent and "they should understand that," he said. Ozcelik further sought U.S. support to curb any UNHCR role within Turkey to monitor and support returnees. Deputy Pol-Mil Counselor declined to comment on any such U.S. support and observed that the U.S. is not at the center of the issue, but is willing to assist if needed, and said Embassy Baghdad will seek further guidance from Washington regarding our participation in any discussions on Makhmour.

Comment

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¶8. (C) COMMENT: Since the inception of the Trilateral Security Dialogue in November 2008, the TGS has been steadfast in its single-minded focus on &tangible results⁸ against the PKK due to &actionable intelligence⁸ from the trilateral mechanism. Their frustration with the lack of deliverables has prevented them from full participation and cooperation at both the TISO and in working group meetings. With the recent arrival of Ambassador Ozcelik and his enthusiasm to bolster the trilateral mechanism, this meeting was a constructive opportunity to reiterate shared goals and manage Turkish expectations. Initially, MG Ozturk again stated the TGS desire for kinetic actions against the PKK and was resistant to most ideas when first presented. However, after productive exchanges, MG Ozturk responded with promises to provide information and increase cooperation, a sign that perhaps the TGS is beginning to understand that they too will have to participate in order to achieve the desired results.
END COMMENT.

Participants

¶9. (U) Turkish Participants:
MG Erdal Ozturk, Chief of Plans and Operations, TGS
Murat Ozcelik, Ambassador
BG Ibrahim Yilmaz, TGS
Sencer Yondem, Deputy Chief of Mission
COL Hasan Polat, Defense Attaché
LTC Serdar Tekin, Deputy Defense Attaché
COL Cahit Dilek, TGS

LTC Serdar Eren, TGS
Inan Ozyildiz, Envoy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Ulas Soylu, Political Officer
Erman Topcu, Political Officer

U.S. Participants:

MajGen Steven Hummer, Director, CJ3 Operations, MNF-I
RMDL Lothrop Little, Deputy CG, Task Force 134
Scotty Reid, Deputy Pol-Mil Counselor
COL Dave Thompson, CJ3 Future Operations, MNF-I
Dew Tiantawach, Pol-Mil Officer
HILL